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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

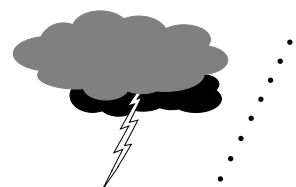
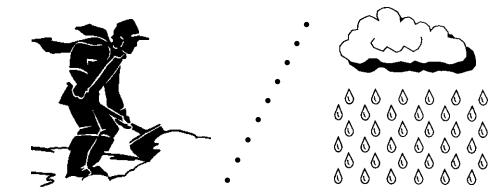
Emergency preparedness yields results

When your citizens ask for second helpings of disaster preparedness, you know you're on the right track. This past August, Rockingham County recreated its successful recipe from last year and held a second workshop on emergency planning for day care operators in the region.

Conducted by Rockingham County Fire

and Rescue and the Department of Social Services, the workshop concentrated on security issues for day care centers and severe weather preparedness. Public Education Supervisor John Huddle organized the event and tailored presentations based on feedback and evaluation forms filled out by last year's attendees.

Representatives from a range of emergency services disciplines talked about subjects such as what to do if a child is missing or becomes sick, how to improve security measures in and around a day care center and the steps to take in the event of a flash flood, tornado, thunderstorm or severe winter weather.



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"We gave them a checklist to assist them with their emergency planning that detailed the items they needed to include," said VDES Region II Coordinator, Curt Nellis, who gave the presentation on severe weather. He pointed out that this type of workshop helps make the emergency coordinator's job easier. "These facilities will take a second look at their preparations. When a disaster strikes, they'll be taking action instead of calling

local government. This will allow local government to focus resources in areas where needs are not as well prepared." One of the featured speakers summed up the case for emergency preparedness. After attending last year's workshop, she explained that she went back and reworked her day care center's emergency plans.

"I revised procedures with regard to fire and missing children. I went into more detail about what to do and who to call," said Meg Vest, director for a child development center in Charlottesville. "I remembered what was said during the workshop — your plan was only as good as the people who carry it out — so I went through the entire plan bit by bit with my staff."

It was tested twice last year, when the center dealt with both a fire and a missing

child who was later found. "The staff did exactly as they were told to do based on our emergency plans," Vest explained. "Had I not attended that workshop, I probably would not have thought about some of the details we worked into the plan. The details smoothed the emergency response."

According to Huddle, plans for next

year may include holding several shorter workshops. "Everyone's time is so valuable, that if we can give them smaller sessions on special topics, we might be able to better meet their needs."

He emphasized, "We can't do it all in emergency services, so we have the obligation to get with the citizens and help them prepare for disasters."

If you would like further information about this workshop, call John Huddle at 540/564-3175.

VDES completes workbook

This resource could prove to be invaluable during the next disaster. The VDES Operations Division has completed the "Rapid Assessment and Request for Assistance Workbook, Version 1.0."

The document is designed to help emergency managers gather the information needed for timely situation reports, prioritize requests for assistance so that

needs can be more rapidly met and submit accurate initial damage assessment reports.

Sample forms and general guidelines for the different categories of emergency response are included. They will help you determine the type of information you need to obtain to facilitate response during a disaster or emergency. Contact your regional coordinator for your copy.

Scenario tests response capabilities

Beginning this September, Virginia will be participating in a major five-part exercise that is the first of its kind in the country. The event, dubbed "Ill Wind," is designed to give local, state and federal agencies the chance to test their readiness in responding to terrorist attacks involving chemical and/or biological agents.

Four preparatory exercises will concentrate on aspects of response to and recovery from this type of incident and will culminate in "Ill Wind," slated to take place in April. State and local government in Virginia will participate in two of the four exercises. The first, "Terminal Breeze," is a tabletop/seminar scheduled for September 4-5 and focuses mainly on medical issues.

"The exercise will provide VDES its first opportunity to work with local government and state and federal agencies

to prepare for a terrorist event," said VDES Training Officer Sam Hoffman. "From this experience we will be able to further refine and develop Virginia's counterterrorism plans. The intent is to expand these types of exercises to other areas in the country."

The "Ill Wind" exercise is part of a nationwide effort by federal, state and local government to implement guidance



contained in Presidential Decision Directive 39 (PDD 39), issued in June, 1995. This document delineates the United States policy on counterterrorism and defines the measures to be taken to combat terrorism.

The directive designates FEMA as the lead agency in consequence management

with regard to terrorist attacks. The agency has been directed to ensure that the Federal Response Plan and state response plans and capabilities in this area are adequate and have been tested. The FBI has been designated the lead agency for crisis management during a terrorist incident and will handle the law enforcement aspects.

In Virginia, the counties of Arlington, Prince William and Fairfax, and the cities of Alexandria and Fairfax will be participating in "Terminal Breeze." The exercise scenario is a grim echo of the Tokyo subway attacks. Players from Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C., will be dealing with the simulated emergencies that arise when the deadly nerve agent, Sarin, is released in five metro stations in the Washington Metro area.

For more information, call Sam Hoffman at 804/674-2458.

Twister facts and figures

Responders across the state have been challenged by this summer's batch of destructive tornadoes. In June, the town of Centreville suffered substantial damage from a tornado packing winds of up to 150 mph.

At least two tornadoes spawned in the aftermath of Hurricane Bertha injured nine in Northumberland County and damaged property along the Eastern Shore.

Add to your knowledge of this weather phenomenon with the facts below.

▼ The region in the world where the most tornadoes occur is in the central plains region of the United States.

▼ Generally, tornadoes move from a southwesterly direction to the northeast, parallel to the cold front line.

▼ Tornadoes can occur at all hours, but they are most likely to develop between

3-7 p.m., when the weather is hottest.

▼ A tornado's path length ranges from 10-40 miles, with an average length of 16 miles. However, the Tri-State tornado of March 18, 1925, rampaged 219 miles in an almost straight line across three states.

▼ The average width of a tornado path is about 400 yards, although some have cut destructive swaths over a mile in width.

▼ A tornado's vortex produces the strongest wind speeds of any surface storm. Recent research indicates most tornadoes have wind speeds of about 112 mph.

▼ The average forward speed of a tornado is 25-40 mph. Speeds can range from as slow as five up to 125 mph.

(Much of this information came from "The Tornado Project" homepage at <http://www.tornadopproject.com/>

Hazmat Conference takes on technology

If technology is a roaring lion and your lion-taming skills are a little rusty, help is on the way. The 1996 Virginia Hazardous Materials Conference plans to assist you with "Taming the Technology of the 21st Century," by providing you with the knowledge, skills and tools you'll need to enter the next century.

Coming to Virginia Beach this September 26-28, the event is sponsored by VDES and the Virginia Association of Hazardous Materials Response Specialists.

There will be a variety of workshop topics such as "Hazmat and the Information Superhighway," "Windows for CAMEO,"

and "Environmental Crimes Task Forces." These events only scratch the surface of the more than 60 workshops, exhibits, demonstrations, equipment displays and numerous other activities that will be offered.

The opportunity to earn hours toward recertification will be offered to hazmat technician team members.

"It's a foregone conclusion that technological changes will continue and the rate of change is expected to accelerate. The only way to keep up with it is to keep ahead of it," said conference coordinator Steve Grainer.

For conference registration material, call (804) 674-2464.

HAZ MAT



VDES Tech Haz Division provides training to FBI agents

Presidential Decision Directive 39 (PPD 39) tasks the FBI to be the lead agency in crisis management during response to a terrorist act. If terrorists use chemical or biological agents, FBI Evidence Response Teams sent to the scene of such a crime would be conducting their mission in a deadly environment.

How can the agency ensure the survival of their people under such conditions? One way is to make sure they receive high quality training. This past June at the Marine Corps Base Quantico, the VDES Technological Hazards Division provided training to 60 Evidence Response Team members (ERTs) as part of the FBI's preparations for the Olympic Games in Atlanta. The training helped prepare team members to be able to collect evidence in a hazardous materials environment within OSHA guidelines.

"The FBI recognized that they needed to train their agents to be able to protect themselves if they had to go to the scene of a crime that involved chemical or biological agents," said Prince William County Hazmat Officer John Medici, one of the course instructors. "The objective was to provide the members of the ERTs with 40-hour OSHA certification so that they would be qualified to operate at a

crime scene involving hazardous materials."

The course used portions of Virginia's Hazardous Materials First Responder Awareness, Operations and Technician Courses modified to meet the specific needs of law enforcement agencies. It included the 40-hour OSHA course and an overview of chem/bio response. Some of the areas in which students received training were the response process, identifying hazardous materials, sampling and decontamination procedures and personal protective equipment.

The course was taught by representatives from the State Police, the Virginia Department of Health and VDES as well as hazmat officers and Fire Services people from the counties of Fairfax, Prince William, Fredericksburg and the city of Alexandria.

"A more specific goal was to ensure that we made them aware of and trained them in chem/bio hazards. A crime involving hazardous materials means it's potentially more dangerous to the evidence collectors," said Medici. "If you are talking about the presence of chem/bio agents, it's flat-out deadly."

Dr. Drew Richardson, chief of the hazmat response unit located at the FBI Research Facility, Quantico, praised the
(continued at top of page)

training as highly worthwhile for the ERT agents. "We would like to be able to provide this type of training at least up to level B for the 800-1,000 ERTs across the country," he said.

The rewards reaped from this partnership are many. "By providing this type of training, VDES has enhanced cooperation between the FBI and the state," said VDES Hazmat Officer and course manager, Steve Patrick. "This opens up a considerable number of

resources for us, such as technological resources with regard to equipment and access to a range of information on chem/bio and other areas."

Medici reinforced this. "We have forged a closer working relationship with the FBI. This cooperation will help prevent duplication of efforts during a response. The end result is that it enhances our ability to protect the safety and well-being of the public in the event of a terrorist act."

FEMA coordinates arson prevention efforts

To help combat the rash of church burnings that have been occurring around the country, the Clinton Administration has selected FEMA to coordinate efforts in its National Arson Prevention Initiative. FEMA Director James Lee Witt announced the first phase of the initiative in June.

One of the key elements was the creation of a national Clearinghouse for Arson Prevention Resources. The clearinghouse coordinates information on arson prevention, training, public education material and technical assistance available from the public and private sector.

Another is the nationwide distribution of a series of public service announcements on arson awareness and prevention, the first of which was sent out in June.

FEMA released \$773,000 in federal funds for arson training programs to increase state capabilities for investigating arson fires.

The \$26,000 Virginia received will come through VDES to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

"This grant money will be used to develop and implement some elements of the Commonwealth's multifaceted efforts to prevent church arson," said George Foresman, VDES assistant state coordinator for operations. "A state task force is looking at three broad strategies to help combat arson and other types of crimes against religious institutions."

One of the strategies is to focus efforts on educating religious communities in crime and arson prevention strategies.

A second is to place emphasis on training public safety officials to assist in prevention and in identifying, investigating and prosecuting those who commit any type of crime, including arson, against a religious institution.

The third is to coordinate with religious institutions and insurance companies so that places of worship damaged because of criminal acts can be speedily repaired or rebuilt.

To contact the Clearinghouse for Arson Prevention Resources, call their toll-free number at 1-888-603-3100.

TRAINING



Coordinator's Briefing

September 17-18
Nokesville

The **Public Policy in Incident Management** class has been cancelled.

For information, call the VDES Training Office at 804/674-2458

Technological Hazards Division

Advanced Hazardous Materials Control

Ashland
October 7-11

Hazardous Materials Technician

Ashland
October 28-November 8

For information, call the VDES Tech Haz Division at 804/674-2510

Workshops

CAMEO Training Workshop

October 16-18
Richmond
For information, call George Roarty at 804/674-2708

More sites worth seeing

The next time you're cruising the Internet, check into the Binomial Disaster Recovery Planning newsletter. This site is packed with high-quality information from around the world related to emergency services.

Designed by Binomial International, a company that specializes in business disaster recovery planning, the online newsletter is the definitive place to find information on conferences, both online and the more traditional types. It features a "grab bag of Web sites," and short information articles on a variety of topics. The company's home page has links to an exhaustive range of emergency services sites. You can find this site at

<http://www.binomial.com/>

Another interesting place to explore is the "Emergency Services WWW Site List."

This home page may contain the largest number of links to emergency services-related organizations on the Internet, with about 990 sites listed.

Categories such as hazmat, search and rescue, fire services and law enforcement, to name a few, provide dozens of global links. A "Personal" category will take you to the home pages of emergency services workers from around the world.

Go to: <http://pplant.uafadm.alaska.edu/www-911.htm>. Add your own site to the list by clicking on the "Add a Site" button.

Hone your SAR skills

For those who want to hone their search and rescue skills, the Ground Search and Rescue Institute will be conducting four classes at Hungry Mother State Park in Smyth County. The classes are: Field Team Member, Field Team Leader, Managing Search Operations and Field Team Sign Cutting.

These courses will be offered in two parts that will last three days each. Part one is scheduled for October 25-27, part two for November 8-10. For information, call Winnie Pennington at 804/674-2422.

Media procedures explained

The National Press Photographers Association has published a book that emergency managers can use to enhance their knowledge regarding media procedures.

The *National Media Guide for Emergency & Disaster Incidents* covers such topics as barriers, media identification procedures, command posts and media information centers, legal rights, private property considerations and safety issues. It addresses the special considerations the media makes regarding hazmat incidents, nuclear facilities, transportation accident investigations and incidents involving the Coast Guard and other military services.

To order this \$12 publication, call 1-800/289-6772 or write NPPA, 3200 Croasdaile Dr., Suite 306, Durham, NC, 27705.



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